

~~CS~~
~~CHS~~
~~BT~~
~~DP~~

United States Senate

7819354

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

September 27, 1978

The President
 The White House
 Washington, DC

copies to: SC
 MS

ACK. FM/NSC
 CONGRESSIONAL
 LIAISON

File: Argentina SEP 29 1978

Dear Mr. President:

On Monday September 25, the State Department made two decisions regarding Argentina. The first is approval of military training for over 30 Argentine military officers in the United States. The second is signature of a letter of interest covering \$270 million in Export-Import Bank credits for a major hydroelectric project to be built by the firm of Allis-Chalmers in northern Argentina.

We have strongly supported the Administration's consistent refusal to approve economic and military projects (excepting humanitarian cases), unless there is substantial improvement in the human rights situation in Argentina. Amnesty International and other independent sources confirm that this situation has not improved, and probably has deteriorated further. Since the 1976 military coup, some 15,000 Argentine men, women and children have simply disappeared, in addition to up to 10,000 who have been officially detained. Argentine Government lists include the names of only 3500, although thousands more are known to be in prison. In the past 100 days alone, Amnesty International has received reports of over 100 disappearances, and fears many more to have disappeared during this period. Thousands of the detainees have been murdered and nearly all "political" prisoners have been tortured by the security forces. This torture and killing continues to this day.

Against this background, we are extremely disappointed by the two State Department decisions and request your personal reconsideration of them. In the past, we were consulted regularly on such decisions, and made clear our strong opposition to any change in Administration policy. However, on this occasion, only a few Senators were notified hours before the decision began to be implemented, with the others completely uninformed. We do not believe that there is any satisfactory explanation for the absence of meaningful and timely consultation, when a significant change is being made in our policy toward Argentina.

Department of State, A/GIS/IPS/SRP

Change to:
☒ Release ☐ Excise ☐ Deny ☐ Declassify
 Exemptions b () () E.O. 13526 25x () ()
 Declassify after _____
 With concurrence of: _____
 obtained _____ not obt. _____
 IPS by 47 Date 11-2-16

SU
 F000
 HU00

REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

The President

Page Two

September 27, 1978

US training of Argentine military officers would be illegal after September 30, under Section 620B of the Foreign Assistance Act as amended. At the time the military cut-off was enacted, the sponsors made clear that it would take effect in FY-1979 to give the Administration flexibility to respond to substantial human rights improvements in Argentina. We welcome the fact that the Administration has refused military training and transfers to Argentina in the past. Since no substantial improvements can be demonstrated, we believe it is highly inappropriate, and possibly a violation of the spirit of the law, to approve training of officers five days before the cut-off takes effect. We therefore strongly urge you to reverse this unwise and unwarranted decision.

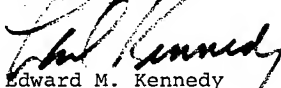
We have been assured by the State Department that it has made no final decision on the Allis-Chalmers project, and that the letter to be signed represents only an interest in keeping that option open. In the absence of substantial human rights progress, we would be unalterably opposed to signing the second letter of intent to make a preliminary commitment of Ex-Im funds to this project. We request full consultations, including consultations with our colleagues on the Foreign Relations and Banking Committees, well before this key step might be taken.

In recent weeks, the Argentine Government has conducted a press campaign in the two countries against your human rights policies. This campaign should not be permitted to obscure the continued, gross violations of human rights in Argentina, and it would be extremely unfortunate if you were not to reverse, or at least revise, these two decisions.

With thanks for your consideration, and best wishes,


Alan Cranston

Sincerely,


Edward M. Kennedy


Paul S. Sarbanes

CC: The Honorable Warren Christopher
Acting Secretary of State

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

ACTION SLIP

(Attachment Classification)

S/S CONTROL NUMBER

7819354

ACTION ASSIGNED TO:

BB ARA

DATE

10/5/78

ACTION REQUESTED

(Action Office Instructions on Reverse)

STATE TO NSC MEMO
STATE TO

Selected original to reply. Send to 844

with Draft reply for signature

by

with Comment or Recommendation

DIRECT REPLY

REPLY FOR SIGNATURE
BY H

provide info copy under cover
of State-NSC transmittal form
provide comeback copy
for

RECOMMENDATION FOR

with Memorandum for the President

APPROPRIATE HANDLING

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

DUE IN S/S BY:
CLEAR WITH:

10/10/78

REMARKS/SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

clear with DHA, NSC

Department of State, A/GIS/PS/SRP

Change to

() Release () Excise () Deny () Declassify
Exemptions b () () E.O. 13526 25x () ()
Declassify after

With concurrence of:

obtained not obt. 10
Date 12-2-10

IPS by

S
D
P
E
T
M
C
S/S
S/S-O
S/S-EX
S/S-S
TEAM A
TEAM B
TEAM C
TEAM D
S/S-I (RF)

UNA
S/AB
S/AR
S/MS
S/P
S/PRS
S/CPR
S/IG
S/IL
S/NM
D/HA
D/IVWY
D/LOS
M/CT
M/DG
M/EEO
M/MO

A
CU
EB
H
IGA
INR
IO
L
OES
PA
PM

SCA
AF
ARA
EA
EUR
NEA
ACDA
AID

FROM:

MARK MORRIS

(NAME)

S/S-S:

A B C D
21522 28338 28348 28062

CLASSIFICATION: U

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

7819354

REFERRAL

Date: 10/3/78
NSC log# 5882

MEMORANDUM FOR:

STATE SECRETARIAT

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Congressional Correspondence

To: President Carter

From: Alan Cranston / Edward M. Kennedy

Date: October 3, 1978

Subject: Military training / Export-Import Bank credits re
Argentine

ACTION REQUESTED:

XXXXXX Direct Reply

____ Copy of Interim Reply
and Incoming Attached

XXXXXXXX AN INTERIM ACK HAS BEEN XXXXXX Furnish info copy
SENT BY WHITE HOUSE

***** DUE DATE: October 10, 1978 ****

COMMENTS: Please furnish a reply within seven days.
Thank you.

***** CLEAR TEXT W/ NSC BEFORE DISPATCH *****

Department of State, A/GIS/IPS/SRP

Change to

(☒) Release () Excise () Deny () Declassify
Exemptions b () () E.O. 13526 25x () ()

Declassify after

With concurrence of:

obtained

not obt.

IPS by

Date

Harold F. Skat
for CHRISTINE DOBSON
STAFF SECRETARY

*Received in S/S-I
10/5 at 9:55 AM
(asg)*

RG59

81D208

HA County E6 1977

3

Argentine